DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 227 CS 010 131

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TITLE Even Start: Factors To Consider in Planning an Intergenerational Literacy Program.
PUB DATE 20 May 88
NOTE 39p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Programs; Family Involvement; *Intergenerational Programs; *Literacy; Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Participation; Parent Responsibility; *Parent Role; *Parents as Teachers; Preschool Education; Program Descriptions
IDENTIFIERS Education Consolidation Improvement Act Chapter 1; *Even Start; *Intergenerational Learning; Literacy Events

ABSTRACT

A summary of the research on adult literacy indicated factors which make an effective program: recruitment of students centered on personal contacts, individual intake conferences, and sensitive and compassionate teachers with high morale about the program. A summary of the research in preschool literacy programs stressed that factors associated with parents, family, or home environment have a greater impact on achievement than school-related factors. A repeated theme in the research was the need to provide preschoolers with lots of reading and other language arts experiences. The most common model of intergenerational literacy programs involved training parents in the development of their children's literacy. The model used for the Even Start legislation combines adult literacy, preschool education, and parent training. Progress of the adult and family as a learning unit is a major goal; activities are provided to foster general literacy, self-esteem growth, and parent-child literacy experiences. Suggestions for planning an Even Start program include: (1) conduct an assessment of adult and preschool literacy needs in the community; (2) establish priorities based on the needs identified; use these priorities to set objectives for the program; (3) based on the objectives, design the Even Start program; (4) plan the program evaluation as part of the program design; and (5) implement the program as planned, and make refinements and changes as indicated and necessary. (One appendix includes suggestions for planning an Even Start program; 20 references and a copy of "Integenerational Literacy Programs: Even Start" (a set of program guidelines detailing the requirements of the legislation) are attached. (MG)

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Even Start:
Factors to Consider
In Planning an
Intergenerational Literacy Program

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Linda W. Thompson

Education L530

May 20, 1988

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Introduction and Thesis: On April 28, 1988 President Reagan signed legislation which reauthorized Chapter 1 (formerly Title I) remedial basic skills programs for educationally disadvantaged students in eligible schools throughout the country. This law also established Even Start, an intergenerational literacy program to be operated under Chapter 1. This new program combines early childhood education for children ages 1 to 7 with adult literacy training for their parents. The legislative intent is that Even Start's prevention and intervention approach will help break the generational cycle of educational disadvantagement for participating families.

Although Title I/Chapter 1 has existed for 23 years, preschool education programs are relatively rare and adult literacy programs nonexistent under the current legislation. Many local school districts will be interested in the new Even Start concept, but may lack familiarity with research or guidelines for developing an intergenerational literacy program. This paper provides a review of literature pertinent to adult, preschool and intergenerational literacy programs. The conclusion summarizes factors which should be considered in planning a legal and educationally sound Even Start intergenerational literacy program.

Adult Literacy Research Summary: It is estimated that approximately 30 percent of the American adult population are illiterate or marginally literate, although figures vary with the criteria used and the source cited. These people suffer economically, socially, and personally because of their educational deficits. Statistics show that, in comparison to their literate counterparts, undereducated Americans make less money, collect more welfare, and are more likely to end up in prison (Bedenbaugh and Rachal).

A variety of adult literacy programs are available to assist these adults in improving their reading achievement. These options include federally-funded programs (e.g., the Job Training Partnership Act), state- and locally-funded programs (e.g., public schools' adult basic education classes), and nonprofit or community-based programs (e.g., Literacy Volunteers of America). No matter how ambitious and well-intended, these programs fall short of significant impact on the nation's literacy problem since they serve less than five percent of the targeted undereducated. The efficacy of these programs has been questioned, since only 20 percent of the learners remain enrolled for more than one year (Diekhoff) and 30 to 70 percent of the learners dropout before achieving "functional literacy". Their reasons for leaving a program (other than out-of-class problems in their daily lives) are most frequently the amount of time required to learn to read, feelings of failure, and an inadequate learning environment (e.g., a lack of ownership to the program)(Chall & Hilferty).

What makes an effective adult literacy program? A variety of factors were listed in the research. Recruitment of students was centered on personal contacts (by staff or other learners) and/or networking referral systems among agencies rather than reliance on media campaigns. Individual intake conferences to discuss each learner's expectations coupled with a thorough diagnosis of reading problems led to early, well-targeted instruction in effective programs. Teachers in these programs were noted for their sensitivity, compassion, high morale about the program, and ability to explain things well. Strong preservice and inservice programs provided ongoing staff development and communication (Balmuth,1986).

Policies to encourage attendance and course completion were established. These included comprehensive counseling services, learner involvement in program planning, a "buddy system" to followup on absentees and dropouts, peer support groups, establishment of a pleasurable social environment, and systems to track and recognize learners' progress and success (Balmuth, 1988). A variety of instructional approaches seemed effective, although use of individual tutoring with illiterate/minimumly literate learners was cited (Chall & Hilferty). The need for well-designed and well-documented evaluation of adult literacy programs was emphasized. The National Association of State Boards of Education stressed "documentation of need and evaluation of progress may well be essential to the continuation of political support and funding." The use of hard statistical data (e.g., test scores, program completion statistics) as well as data from more informal sources (e.g., anecdotal case studies, self-reports) was encouraged.

Preschool Literacy Research Summary: The family's influence on intergenerational literacy (or illiteracy) is well-documented. Becher reported that factors associated with parents, family or home environment have a greater impact on achievement than do school-related factors. The Reading Report Card cited parents' increased level of education and the availability of reading materials in the home as important factors in reading achievement. The importance of parents as reading role models for their children was cited by Manning and Manning. A redundant theme in the research was the need to provide preschoolers with lots of reading and other language arts experiences (e.g., speaking, listening, writing) to develop a strong language base and interest in reading (Larrick, Early Childhood IRA).

IRA's Early Childhood and Literacy Development Committee recommended preschool program designs which weave print and the opportunity to use it meaningfully throughout the environment as well as including time for reading and writing activities. Research findings also broadly support programs which provide for children's cognitive, social and emotional development and encourage curiosity, thinking, and creativity rather than the development of isolated skills. These program elements were well-reflected in a review of 25 nationally-recognized Chapter 1 preschool programs. These programs included a mix of small group, individual, and self-selected activities in settings with low student:instructor ratios (usually about 10:1). Over 75% of these programs included parent training, frequently with regular home visits as part of the program (Effective Compensatory Education Sourcebook).

Elements of current reading and effective schools' research were reflected in recommendations for preschool programs. Building on what the learner already knows, planning activities to ensure success, and encouraging risk-taking were listed in the IRA's recommendations as well as evaluation based on objectives. The need for a positive, supportive classroom environment was stressed by Larrick. The importance of high expectations was frequently cited in the literature. A belief in the value of hard work, the importance of personal responsibility, and the importance of education itself was seen as contributing to school success. Such expectations are generated by both parents and the school (What Works, Durkin).

Intergenerational Literacy Programs Research Summary: There is currently no coherent body of research regarding intergenerational

literacy, but comments in the research allude to these programs. For example, Chall and Hilferty stated "solutions to the problem of adult literacy must also be tied to programs for the improvement of literacy among young people" and Park commented that "to make a serious impact on the long-range literacy problem in the U.S., the focus must be on children and families, beginning before children enter school." Conrad and Eash said "(preschool literacy) programs should affect home environment and family attitudes if they are to have long-term effects."

Two basic types of intergenerational literacy programs are described in the literature. The most common model involves programs which train parents in the development of their children's literacy, typically through workshops or home visits. The model used for the Even Start legislation combines adult literacy and preschool education, in addition to parent training. Kentucky's PACE Program (Heberle) and Boston's Family Learning Center (Nickse, et al) are examples. Maintaining that there is no quick fix to intergenerational literacy problems, these programs provide a minimum of four to ten hours of direct instruction each week to the preschool and adult learners. Progress of the adult and family as a learning unit is a major goal; activities are provided to foster general literacy, self-esteem growth, and parent-child literacy experiences. These programs lack extensive evaluation data; however, reported adult learner attendance and completion rates of 70 to 80 percent predict success.

Conclusion -- Factors to Consider in Planning an Even Start Program: Basing an Even Start program on research findings such as those included in this paper will ensure an educationally-sound project.

While a well-studied plan for the adult literacy and preschool education components of the program is important, it is also necessary to include Chapter 1 legal requirements in the program planning process. Chapter 1 law specifies certain steps in Chapter 1 program planning and these requirements closely parallel the guidelines recommended for planning an effective adult literacy program (Montez; Mayer). The scope of this paper does not allow a full discussion of these planning steps, but they are briefly summarized below.

1. Conduct an adult and preschool literacy needs assessment to identify the needs, existing services, and possibilities relative to an Even Start program.

2. Identify priorities from the needs assessment data and establish program objectives. Plan the project's evaluation based on these objectives.

3. Build from these objectives to design the program. Include research recommendations such as those described in this paper; consider budget and/or resources constraints.

4. Do the groundwork necessary to ensure success. Avoid negligient or hasty preparation which may create problems and impede project success. Select the students most in need of help and then implement the program as planned.

5. During implementation, develop procedures and gather information to ensure on-going refinement of the program. Use both formative and summative evaluation as feedback, support and critiques of the project.

Appendix A, Suggestions for Planning an Even Start Program, offers an expansion of this outline and may be useful to program planners.

Appendix A

Suggestions for Planning an Even Start Program

1. Conduct an assessment of adult and preschool literacy needs in the community.

- Gather a variety of data, such as literacy demographic information; surveys of community employers, social service and educational agencies; interviews with potential students.
- "Work backwards" from the district's kindergarten screening or needs assessment to get a picture of possible preschool learners' needs.
- Establish contacts and begin networking with various community, social service agencies, literacy organizations, and preschool services in the community.
- Determine the extent of preschool and adult literacy services available in the community for the population targeted by an Even Start program.
- Identify potential sources of the matching funds needed in the operation of an Even Start program (10 percent the first year, increasing in 10 percent increments to a maximum of 40 percent matching funds by the fourth and each successive year).

2. Establish priorities based on the needs identified; use these priorities to set objectives for the program.

- Objectives must be specific, attainable, measurable, and relevant.
- Objectives must clearly state what is to be accomplished, for whom, when, and how that accomplishment will be measured.

3. Based on these objectives, design the Even Start program.

- Consider findings and recommendations from research.
- Avoid duplication of programs already operating in the community for the targeted population.
- Identify limitations such as budget, time, and resource constraints.
- Determine staffing needs, such as certified teachers, paraprofessionals, home-school liaisons, social workers, counselors, program coordinators, and/or administrators.
- Determine the program's instructional designs for adult learners, preschool students, and parent-child training.
- List the instructional materials, supplies, and equipment needed to operate the program.
- Develop a plan for preservice and inservice staff development.

- Determine the location of the program. Will transportation be provided for the learners/students? Does the state have special requirements for vehicles transporting preschool students?
- Develop the schedule and timeline for the program.
- Develop a budget planning and record-keeping system.
- Obtain commitments for the matching funds needed in the program's budget.

4. Plan the program evaluation as part of the program design.

- Consider evaluation as a process for feedback and support rather than criticism.
- Determine baseline data to be gathered early in the program.
- Gather information for formative (ongoing) evaluation to assist in clarifying both the administrative and learning processes.
- Have a plan for summative evaluation to measure the changes accomplished through this program.
- Plan to gather "hard" data (e.g., formal testing, statistical information) as well as anecdotal and informal results.
- Include a plan for longitudinal evaluation: information gathered after the adult and preschool students have been out of the program for a while.
- Emphasize "impact" (e.g., numbers of services delivered, changes in academic performance, measured improvements in self-concept as well as "processes" learned in the program (e.g., how problems were solved, what worked well?, what didn't work well?)
- Were all of the program objectives accomplished? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Provide an intelligible, interesting, and useful picture of the program.

5. Implement the program as planned. Make refinements and changes as indicated and necessary.

- Develop procedures to ensure that the program stays on track towards implementing research-based instruction and meeting the program's as well as students' objectives.
- Include frequent and ongoing recognition of students' and staff's achievements and contributions.
- Maintain the networking with other social service, educational, business, and community resources.
- Constantly seek to improve the quality of instruction and support provided the learners in the program.
- Involve the adult learners in the planning and operation of the program.
- Have a system for recording, updating, and compiling information pertinent to the program's efforts and results with the learners. DEVELOP EFFICIENT PAPERWORK PROCEDURES.

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INTERGENERATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMS: EVEN START

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AN OVERVIEW OF EVEN START

Sections 1051-1058, P.L. 100-297

Purpose:

Improve the educational opportunities of children and adults by integrating early childhood education and adult education for parents in a unified program. These are to be cooperative projects that build on existing community resources.

The projects are to provide family-centered education which involve parents and children in a cooperative effort to help parents become full partners in the education of their children and to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners.

The costs of this program must be shared with the collaborating agencies. The Federal share may not be more than:

90% of the total cost the first year;
80% the second year;
70% the third year; and
60% the fourth and each succeeding year.

Funds may not be used for indirect costs.

LEAs may collaborate with colleges, universities, community-based organizations, state agencies, or appropriate non-profit groups.

Each program must include:

1. identification and recruitment of children.

2. screening and preparation of parents and children for participation, including testing, referral to counseling, and related services.

3. design of programs and provision of support services not available from other sources; the program must be appropriate to the participants' work and other schedules, such as:
   - scheduling and location of services to allow joint participation of parents and children;
   - child care for the time parents are involved in the program;
   - transportation to enable parents and their children to participate.

4. instructional programs that promote adult literacy, training parents to support the educational growth of their children, and preparation of children for success in regular school programs.

5. provision of special training for the staff to develop skills needed to work with parents and young children in the full range of instructional services offered in the program.

6. provision of and monitoring of integrated instructional services to the parents and children through home-based programs.

7. coordination with other adult literacy and/or preschool education programs (e.g., JTPA, Adult Education, Head Start, volunteer literacy programs).

8. independent annual evaluation. (not required)

Grants will be awarded based on the programs most likely to be successful in meeting the Even Start goals, serve the greatest percentage of eligible participants; and demonstrate the greatest degree of cooperation with a variety of relevant service providers. Budgets must be reasonable and the LEA must demonstrate that it can obtain the shared cost funding. A review panel will rate proposals.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING AN EVEN START PROGRAM

1. **Conduct an assessment of adult and preschool literacy needs in the community.**

   - Gather a variety of data, such as literacy demographic information; surveys of community employers, social service and educational agencies; interviews with potential students.
   - "Work backwards" from the district's kindergarten screening or needs assessment to get a picture of possible preschool learners' needs.
   - Establish contacts and begin networking with various community, social service agencies, literacy organizations, and preschool services in the community.
   - Determine the extent of preschool and adult literacy services available in the community for the population targeted by an Even Start program.
   - Identify potential sources of the matching funds needed in the operation of an Even Start program (10 percent the first year, increasing in 10 percent increments to a maximum of 40 percent matching funds by the fourth and each successive year).

2. **Establish priorities based on the needs identified; use these priorities to set objectives for the program.**

   - Objectives must be specific, attainable, measurable, and relevant.
   - Objectives must clearly state what is to be accomplished, for whom, when, and how that accomplishment will be measured.

3. **Based on these objectives, design the Even Start program.**

   - Consider findings and recommendations from research.
   - Avoid duplication of programs already operating in the community for the targeted population.
   - Identify limitations such as budget, time, and resource constraints.

- Determine staffing needs, such as certified teachers, paraprofessionals, home-school liaisons, social workers, counselors, program coordinators, and/or administrators.
- Determine the program's instructional designs for adult learners, preschool students, and parent-child training.
- List the instructional materials, supplies, and equipment needed to operate the program.
- Develop a plan for preservice and inservice staff development.
- Determine the location of the program. Will transportation be provided for the learners/students? Does the state have special requirements for vehicles transporting preschool students?
- Develop the schedule and timeline for the program.
- Develop a budget planning and record-keeping system.
- Obtain commitments for the matching funds needed in the program's budget.

4. Plan the program evaluation as part of the program design.

- Consider evaluation as a process for feedback and support rather than criticism.
- Determine baseline data to be gathered early in the program.
- Gather information for formative (ongoing) evaluation to assist in clarifying both the administrative and learning processes.
- Have a plan for summative evaluation to measure the changes accomplished through this program.
- Plan to gather "hard" data (e.g., formal testing, statistical information) as well as anecdotal and informal results.
- Include a plan for longitudinal evaluation: information gathered after the adult and preschool students have been out of the program for a while.
- Emphasize "impact" (e.g., numbers of services delivered, changes in academic performance, measured improvements in self-concept as well as "processes" learned in the program (e.g., how problems were solved, what worked well?, what didn't work well?)
- Were all of the program objectives accomplished? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Provide an intelligible, interesting, and useful picture of the program.

5. **Implement the program as planned. Make refinements and changes as indicated and necessary.**

   - Develop procedures to ensure that the program stays on track towards implementing research-based instruction and meeting the program's and well as student's objectives.
   - Include frequent and ongoing recognition of students' and staff's achievements and contributions.
   - Maintain the networking with other social service, educational, business, and community resources.
   - Constantly seek to improve the quality of instruction and support provided the learners in the program.
   - Involve the adult learners in the planning and operation of the program.
   - Have a system for recording, updating, and compiling information pertinent to the program's efforts and results with the learners. DEVELOP EFFICIENT PAPERWORK PROCEDURES.

KEY POINTS FROM RESEARCH

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- recruitment by personal contact
- individual diagnosis and well-targeted instruction
- competent, sensitive, articulate teachers
- strong preservice/inservice for staff
- policies to encourage attendance and course completion
- need for formal and informal evaluation

PRESCHOOL LITERACY PROGRAMS

- abundant reading and language arts experiences
- "build" on prior experience and success
- encourage curiosity, thinking, creativity
- mix: small group; whole group; independent
- include parent training
- high expectations

EVEN START

1. Intergenerational Literacy Program

   - Unified program of early childhood education and adult education
   - Cooperative project with existing community resources

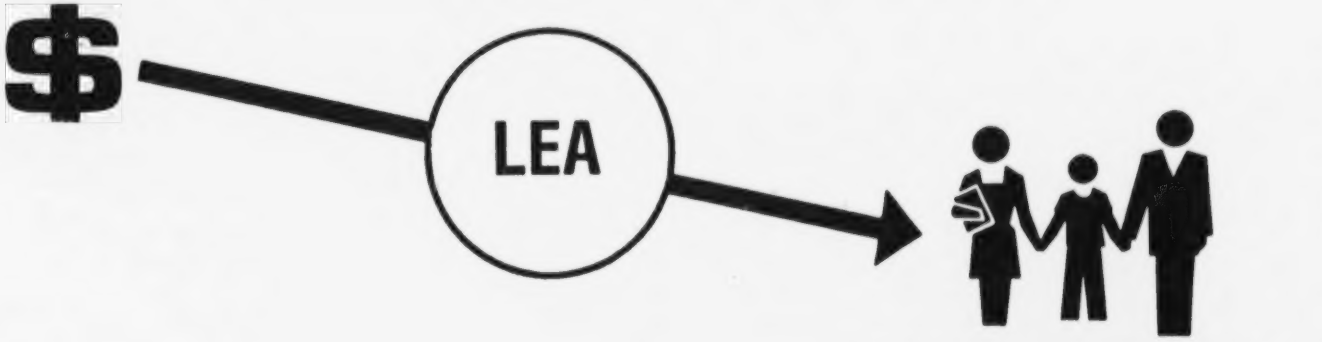
2. Sections 1051-1058 of P.L. 100-297

3. For FY90, LEAs apply directly to U.S. Department of Education

   - $15,000,000 expected; minimum = $250,000 per state
   - Expected timeline:
     proposal announcement: January 1989
     proposal deadline: March, 1989
     awards made: May/June, 1989
     startup by LEAs: after July 1, 1989

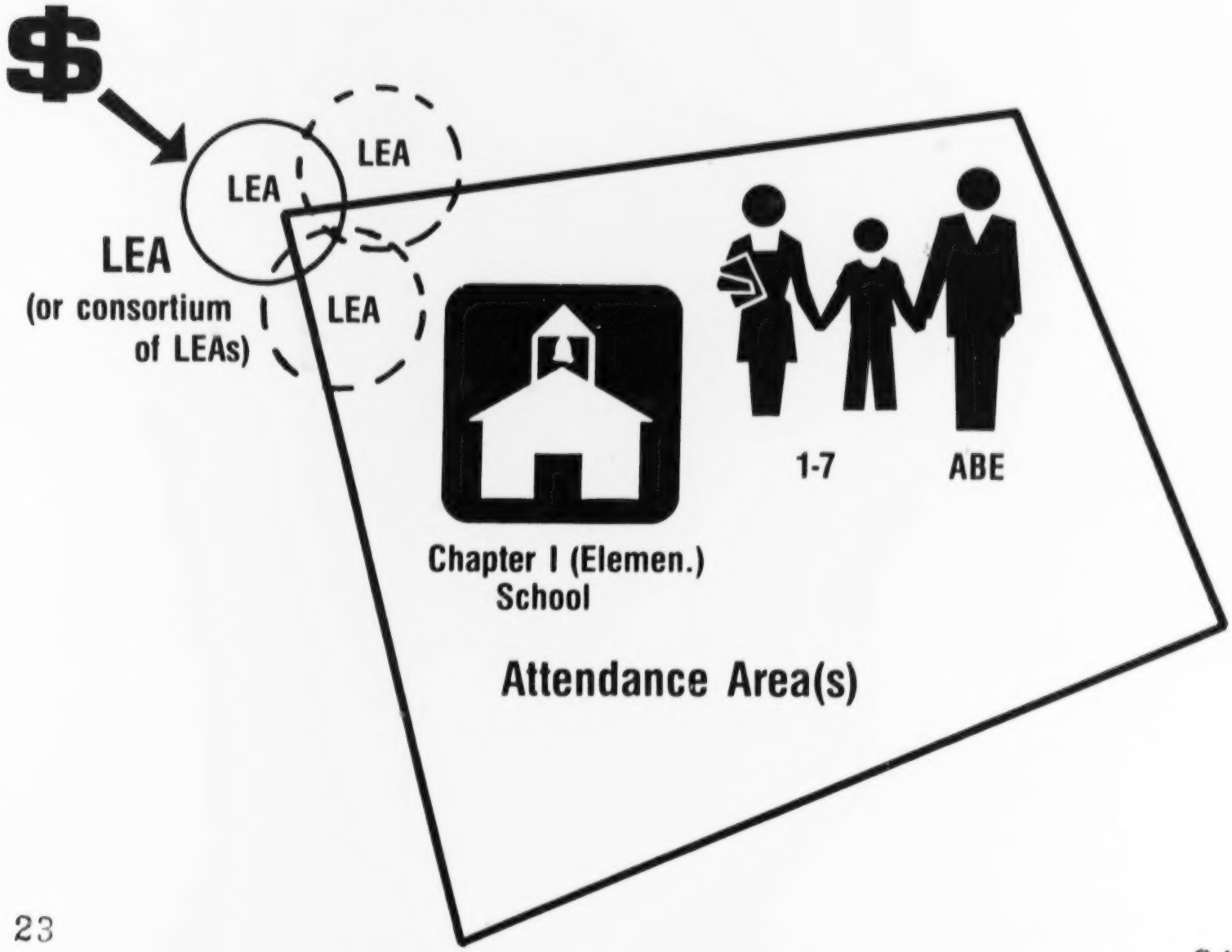
EVEN START

A DISCRETIONARY PROGRAM

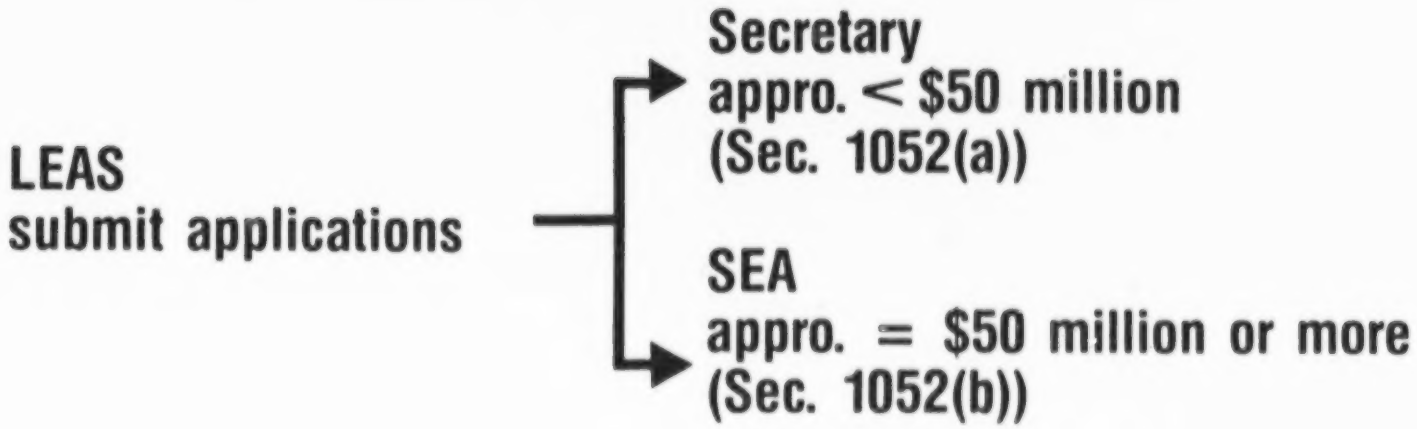


Programs that build on existing services to—

- Help parents become full partners in the education of their children
- Help children in reaching their full potential as learners


$
LEA
LEA
LEA
(or consortium
of LEAs)
LEA
1-7
ABE
Chapter I (Elemen.)
School
Attendance Area(s)

Sec. 1056(a)


LEAS
submit applications
Secretary
appro. < $50 million
(Sec. 1052(a))
SEA
appro. = $50 million or more
(Sec. 1052(b))

Sec. 1054(c)

	Even Start Dollars	Remaining Costs*
Year 1	90%	10%
Year 2	80%	20%
Year 3	70%	30%
Year 4	60%	40%

* Federal (other than Title I of the Act) and State and Local funds

Applications must contain:

Sec. 1056(b)

- Documentation to show the LEA has the qualified personnel required to . . .
  - Develop, administer and implement the program
  - Provide the special training necessary to prepare staff for the program

Sec. 1056(c)

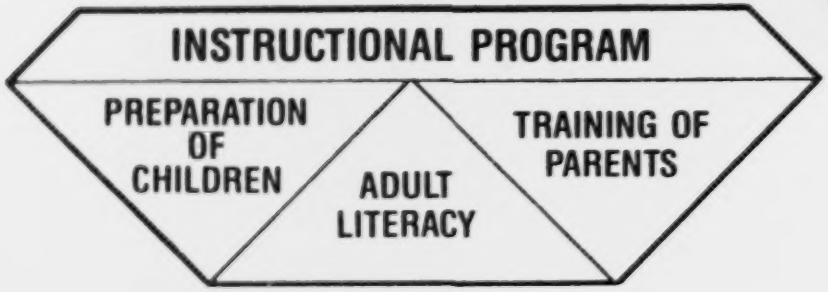
- Plan of Operation
  - Goals (objectives)
    - against which the progress of the project can be measured
  - Activities and services to be provided
    - must include the 7 elements

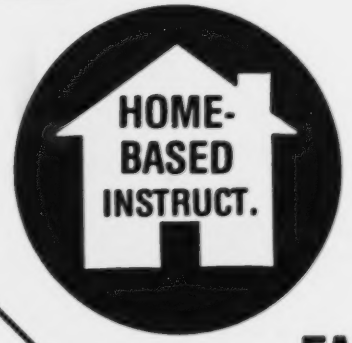
Sec. 1056(b): REQUIRED PROGRAM ELEMENTS

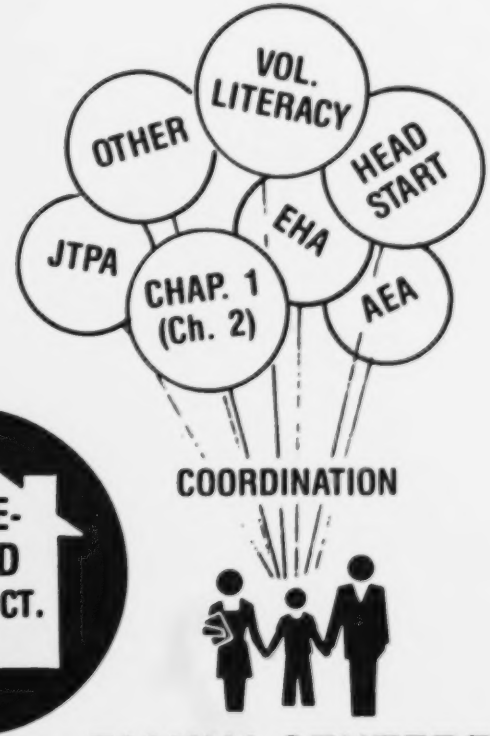
IDENTIFICATION & RECRUITMENT

SCREENING & PREPARATION

SUPPORTIVE DESIGN & SERVICES







FAMILY CENTERED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Section 1056(c) (continued)

PLAN that shall include a description of—

- Goals (objectives)
- Activities and Services
- Population to be served; estimate of number
- Any collaborative efforts of IHEs (Inst. of Higher Educ.), SEA, community organizations, private elementary schools, other nonprofit organizations
- Description of Methods to be used to ensure—

  (A) That those most in need will be served

  (B) Service to LEP and handicapped individuals

  (C) That participants remain in the program long enough to meet program goals

- Methods by which the applicant will coordinate project with chapters 1 and 2, AEA, JTPA, Head Start, Volunteer literacy programs, etc.

SELECTION PROCESS

Section 1057(a): Criteria

(1) Are most likely to be successful in meeting the goals of this part;

(2) Serve the greatest percentage of eligible children and parents as described in section 1055;

(3) Demonstrate the greatest degree of cooperation and coordination between a variety of relevant service providers in all phases of the program;

(4) Submit budgets which appear reasonable, given the scope of the proposal;

(5) Demonstrate the local educational agency's ability to provide additional funding under section 1054(c);

(6) Are representative of urban and rural regions of the State or of the United States, as the case may be; and

(7) Show the greatest promise for providing models which may be transferred to other local educational agencies.

SELECTION PROCESS (continued)

Section 1057(b): REVIEW PANEL 7 members

Must include

(1) early childhood professional
(2) adult education professional
(3) representative of business and industry
(4) Chapter 1 representative from SEA

Section 1057(c): Secretary assures

- Grants are representative of urban and rural areas of the U.S. and of a State
- Grants are distributed equitably among the States

Section 1057(d): To Grant funding in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years

- Secretary (or SEA) reviews progress made toward meeting the objectives of the project

Section 1058: EVALUATION

Secretary: Responsible for annual independent evaluation of programs to determine their effectiveness—

(1) In providing

- Services to special populations
- Adult education
- Parent training
- Home based programs involving parents and children
- Coordination with related programs
- Training of related personnel in appropriate skill areas

(2) In achieving their stated goals

- Each evaluation shall contain objective measures of such goals
- Whenever feasible, obtain views of program participants

Summary of evaluation results to be reported to Congress by September 30, 1993

Grantee: Must annually show progress toward meeting its project objectives.

Congress intends this as demonstr